

GCL (Government Category List) Version 1.0

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Summary

Making it easier to find information is a key aim of Information Age Government, and is addressed in part by the e-Government Metadata Framework (e-GMF). The Government Category List (GCL) is a list of headings for use with the Subject element of the e-Government Metadata Standard (e-GMS). It will be seen in applications such as UK Online. Subject metatags drawn from the GCL will make it straightforward for website managers to present their resources in a directory structure using the GCL headings.

This first edition (Version 1.0, issued January 2002) shows four views of the GCL.

1. The top-level headings, emulating the view that would greet the user of a website or portal that has implemented the scheme. Any one of the headings may be selected by the user and expanded to the next level down.
2. The top two levels of headings.
3. The additional levels of hierarchy currently available in the scheme.
4. The Index, available as a separate document.

Maintenance and updating

The GCL is a living document which must evolve if it is to continue to serve the public in a world of changing technology and changing needs. Suggestions for improving it will be welcomed throughout its lifetime. During 2002, updates will be issued at four-monthly intervals.

If you have suggestions for the first update, please send them to SDClarke@lukehouse.demon.co.uk by 8 March 2002. Your feedback on how the GCL performs in practice will be greatly welcomed.

GCL Listings (Version 1.0, January 2002)

Top Level Headings

Agriculture, environment and natural resources

Arts, recreation and travel

Business and industry

Crime, law, justice and rights

Economics and finance

Education, careers and employment

Government, politics and public administration

Health, nutrition and care

Information and communication

International affairs and defence

People, communities and living

Science, technology and innovation

Top Two Levels

Agriculture, environment and natural resources

- Energy and fuel
- Environmental protection
- Farming
- Fisheries
- Forestry
- Horticulture
- Land
- Plants and animals
- Waste management
- Water resources

Arts, recreation and travel

- Culture and creativity
- Gambling and lotteries
- Parks and gardens
- Passports and visas
- Sports and recreation
- Tourism
- Transport

Business and industry

- Business practice and regulation
- Business sectors
- Companies
- Consumer affairs
- Energy and fuel
- International trade
- Transport

Crime, law, justice and rights

- Animal rights and welfare
- Civil and human rights
- Crime
- Emergencies
- Ethical issues
- Extradition
- Firearms
- Justice system
- Law
- Security

Economics and finance

- Capital and financial markets
- Economic development
- Euro and EMU
- Investment
- Labour market
- Monopolies and mergers
- Nationalisation/privatisation
- Personal finance
- Public finance
- Tax
- UK economy

Education, careers and employment

- Career development
- Education and skills
- Employment relations
- Equal opportunities
- Occupational health and safety
- Unemployment and jobseeking
- Working hours, terms and conditions

Government, politics and public administration

- Central government
- Civil Service
- Constitution
- Devolved administrations
- Electoral system
- Honours system
- Local government
- Political parties
- Public administration
- Regional policy

Health, nutrition and care

- Animal health
- Benefits
- Care
- Carers and health professionals
- Disabled people
- Family planning
- Food and drink
- Health
- National Health Service (NHS)
- Private health care
- Safety

Information and communication

- Communications industries
- Data security
- Freedom of information
- Information technology
- Intellectual property
- Intelligence
- Libraries and archives
- Media and the press
- Privacy and data protection

International affairs and defence

- Defence
- Embassies and consulates
- European Union
- Extradition
- Foreign policy
- Immigration and asylum
- International conflict
- International development and aid
- International organisations
- International relations

People, communities and living

- Benefits
- Charities
- Death and funerals
- Drugs and alcohol
- Housing
- Marriage and divorce
- Pensions
- People
- Population and migration
- Religion
- Rural communities
- Social inclusion
- Urban communities

Science, technology and innovation

- Biotechnology
- Information technology
- Research and development

Complete List

Agriculture, environment and natural resources

- . Energy and fuel
 - . . Energy conservation
 - . . Fossil fuels
 - . . Nuclear energy
 - . . Renewable energy
- . Environmental protection
 - . . Climate and weather
 - . . Coastal erosion and protection
 - . . Environmental monitoring
 - . . Nature conservation
 - . . Pollution
- . Farming
 - . . Arable farming
 - . . Common Agricultural Policy
 - . . Crops
 - . . . Genetically modified food and crops
 - . . Livestock farming
- . Fisheries
 - . . Common Fisheries Policy
- . Forestry
- . Horticulture
 - . . Common Agricultural Policy
- . Land
 - . . Agricultural land
 - . . Countryside
 - . . . Access to countryside
 - . . Flooding
 - . . Planning (land use)
 - . . Wetlands
- . Plants and animals
 - . . Animal health
 - . . . BSE, CJD and TSEs
 - . . . Foot and mouth disease
 - . . . Tuberculosis
 - . . Animal rights and welfare
 - . . . Animal experimentation
 - . . . Hunting
 - . . Pest and weed control
 - . . Plant health
- . Waste management
 - . . Composting
 - . . Recycling (waste)
 - . . Sewage treatment and disposal
- . Water resources

Arts, recreation and travel

- . Culture and creativity
 - . . Architecture
 - . . Crafts
 - . . Heritage
 - . . Libraries and archives
 - . . Literature and writing
 - . . Millennium projects
 - . . Museums and galleries
 - . . Music
 - . . Performing arts

- . . Visual arts
- . Gambling and lotteries
 - . . National Lottery
- . Parks and gardens
- . Passports and visas
- . Sports and recreation
 - . . Athletics
 - . . Football
 - . . Hunting
 - . . Water sports
 - . . Winter sports
- . Tourism
- . Transport
 - . . Air transport
 - . . Freight transport
 - . . Inland waterways
 - . . Ports and maritime transport
 - . . Public transport
 - . . Rail transport
 - . . Roads and road transport
 - . . . Road safety

Business and industry

- . Business practice and regulation
 - . . Advertising
 - . . Business development
 - . . Business management
 - . . Charities
 - . . . Volunteering
 - . . Competitiveness
 - . . e-Commerce
 - . . Occupational health and safety
 - . . . Fire safety
 - . . Regulation and deregulation
 - . . Standards, weights and measures
 - . . Working hours, terms and conditions
- . Business sectors
 - . . Building and construction
 - . . . Building regulations
 - . . Communications industries
 - . . Distribution and service industries
 - . . . Distribution services
 - Post Office
 - . . . Financial service industries
 - . . . Food and drink services
 - . . . Retail trade
 - . . . Tourism
 - . . . Utilities
 - Electricity supply
 - Gas supply
 - Telephone services
 - Water supply
 - . . Manufacturing
 - . . . Chemical industry
 - . . . Defence industries
 - . . . Electronics industry
 - . . . Food manufacturing industry

- Meat and livestock industries
- . . . Motor industry
- . . Mineral extraction, mining, quarrying
- . Companies
 - . . Small and medium enterprises
- . Consumer affairs
- . Energy and fuel
 - . . Energy conservation
 - . . Fossil fuels
 - . . Nuclear energy
 - . . Renewable energy
- . International trade
 - . . Exports
 - . . Globalisation
 - . . Imports
 - . . Trade agreements
- . Transport
 - . . Air transport
 - . . Freight transport
 - . . Inland waterways
 - . . Ports and maritime transport
 - . . Public transport
 - . . Rail transport
 - . . Roads and road transport
 - . . . Road safety

Crime, law, justice and rights

- . Animal rights and welfare
 - . . Animal experimentation
 - . . Hunting
- . Civil and human rights
- . Crime
 - . . Anti-social behaviour and disorder
 - . . Arson
 - . . Business crime
 - . . Domestic violence
 - . . Drug-related crime
 - . . Murder
 - . . Offenders
 - . . Organised crime and terrorism
 - . . Racially-motivated crime
 - . . Sex offences
 - . . Smuggling
 - . . Theft and burglary
 - . . Vehicle crime
 - . . Victims of crime
 - . . Violence against the person
 - . . War crime
- . Emergencies
 - . . Civil emergencies
 - . . Fire service
 - . . Police
- . Ethical issues
- . Extradition
- . Firearms
- . Justice system
 - . . Courts of law
 - . . Judiciary
 - . . Parole
 - . . Police

- . . Prisons
- . . Probation
- . . Sentencing
- . . Youth justice
- . Law
- . Security
 - . . Data security
 - . . National security
 - . . Personal security
 - . . Security of property

Economics and finance

- . Capital and financial markets
- . Economic development
 - . . Regeneration
 - . . Rural development
 - . . Sustainable development
- . Euro and EMU
- . Investment
 - . . Inward investment
 - . . Outward investment
- . Labour market
- . Monopolies and mergers
- . Nationalisation/privatisation
 - . . Public private partnership
- . Personal finance
 - . . Pensions
- . Public finance
 - . . Budget (UK)
 - . . Government spending
 - . . Public funding
- . Tax
 - . . Corporation tax
 - . . Customs levies
 - . . Excise duties
 - . . Income tax
 - . . Local taxation
 - . . National insurance
 - . . VAT
- . UK economy
 - . . Living standards, incomes and wages
 - . . Prices and inflation

Education, careers and employment

- . Career development
- . Education and skills
 - . . Adult education and training
 - . . Colleges and universities
 - . . . Qualifications (post-16)
 - . . . Student funding
 - . . Pre-school learning
 - . . Schools
 - . . . Curriculum and qualifications (pre-16)
 - . . . Pupil support
 - . . . Qualifications (post-16)
 - . . . School admission and choice
 - . . . School management and funding
 - . . . School standards and inspections
 - . . . Teachers, governors and staff
 - . . . Special educational needs

- . Employment relations
- . Equal opportunities
- . Occupational health and safety
 - . . Fire safety
- . Unemployment and jobseeking
- . Working hours, terms and conditions

Government, politics and public administration

- . Central government
 - . . Cabinet
 - . . Executive agencies
 - . . Government departments
 - . . Ministers
 - . . Prime Minister
- . Civil Service
- . Constitution
 - . . Devolution
 - . . Monarchy
 - . . National Assembly for Wales
 - . . Northern Ireland Assembly
 - . . Scottish Parliament
 - . . UK Parliament
- . Devolved administrations
- . Electoral system
- . Honours system
- . Local government
- . Political parties
- . Public administration
 - . . Best value in public administration
 - . . Maladministration
 - . . Modernising government
 - . . . e-Government
 - . . Public bodies
- . Regional policy
 - . . Government Offices for the Regions
 - . . Regional Development Agencies

Health, nutrition and care

- . Animal health
 - . . BSE, CJD and TSEs
 - . . Foot and mouth disease
 - . . Tuberculosis
- . Benefits
- . Care
 - . . Care for children
 - . . Care for the disabled
 - . . Care for the elderly
 - . . Youth services
- . Carers and health professionals
- . Disabled people
 - . . Care for the disabled
- . Family planning
- . Food and drink
 - . . Baby foods
 - . . Drinks
 - . . Fish
 - . . Food labelling
 - . . Food safety
 - . . Food supply
 - . . Fruit and vegetables

- . . Genetically modified food and crops
- . . Meat
- . . Milk and dairy products
- . . Nutrition
- . . Organic foods
- . Health
 - . . Dental health
 - . . Diseases
 - . . . AIDS and HIV
 - . . . BSE, CJD and TSEs
 - . . . Cancer
 - . . . Heart disease and stroke
 - . . . Tuberculosis
 - . . Drugs and alcohol
 - . . . Alcohol use and abuse
 - . . . Drugs use and abuse
 - . . . Smoking
 - . . Environmental health
 - . . Health education
 - . . Medicines
 - . . Mental health
 - . . Preventive medicine
- . National Health Service (NHS)
 - . . Ambulance services
 - . . NHS management
 - . . NHS performance
 - . . Primary health care
 - . . Secondary health care
- . Private health care
 - . . Private health insurance
 - . . Private hospitals
- . Safety
 - . . Fire safety
 - . . Food safety
 - . . Hazardous substances
 - . . Hygiene
 - . . Road safety
 - . . Safety in the home

Information and communication

- . Communications industries
- . Data security
- . Freedom of information
- . Information technology
 - . . Internet
- . Intellectual property
- . Intelligence
- . Libraries and archives
- . Media and the press
 - . . Advertising
 - . . Broadcasting
- . Privacy and data protection

International affairs and defence

- . Defence
 - . . Armed forces
 - . . . British Army
 - . . . Royal Air Force
 - . . . Royal Navy
 - . . Defence agencies

- . . Defence equipment and supplies
- . . Defence land and buildings
- . . Defence policy
 - . . . Arms control
 - . . . Defence alliances and organisations
 - NATO
 - . . . Military operations
 - . . . Peace-keeping
- . Embassies and consulates
- . . Passports and visas
- . European Union
 - . . Common Agricultural Policy
 - . . Common Fisheries Policy
 - . . EU institutions
 - . . Euro and EMU
- . Extradition
- . Foreign policy
- . Immigration and asylum
 - . . Immigration detention centres
- . International conflict
 - . . Economic sanctions
- . International development and aid
- . International organisations
 - . . Commonwealth
 - . . NATO
 - . . OECD
 - . . United Nations
 - . . World Bank
- . International relations

People, communities and living

- . Benefits
- . Charities
 - . . Volunteering
- . Death and funerals
- . Drugs and alcohol
 - . . Alcohol use and abuse
 - . . Drugs use and abuse
 - . . Smoking
- . Housing

- . . Home ownership
- . . Homelessness
- . . Housing repairs and renovation
- . . Private rented accommodation
- . . Social housing
- . Marriage and divorce
- . Pensions
- . People
 - . . Carers and health professionals
 - . . Disabled people
 - . . . Care for the disabled
 - . . Families and children
 - . . . Care for children
 - . . Men
 - . . Minority groups
 - . . Occupations and employees
 - . . Older people
 - . . . Care for the elderly
 - . . Refugees
 - . . Victims of crime
 - . . Women
 - . . Young people
 - . . . Youth services
- . Population and migration
- . Religion
- . Rural communities
- . Social inclusion
 - . . Equal opportunities
 - . . Race relations
- . Urban communities

Science, technology and innovation

- . Biotechnology
 - . . Genetically modified food and crops
- . Information technology
 - . . Internet
- . Research and development

What is the GCL for?

Helping people find information

The citizen who wants to find out about a service or aspect of policy faces a daunting challenge, especially when he does not know which department, authority or agency to approach. The sheer quantity of information available has the effect of hiding the nugget sought. Websites and portals like UK Online already offer access to a broad range of public sector information and services. Implementing the directory structure of the GCL will help people navigate through the ocean of resources to the pool where they can find what they want.

Directories: one approach among many

Every good web site offers users a variety of ways of finding things, including

- ?? A-Z indexes
- ?? free text searching
- ?? advanced searching, with Boolean logic, etc.
- ?? thesauri
- ?? directory structures, of the type that has made *Yahoo!* a household name.

Given a directory, all the user has to do is select from a short list of category headings. The system very often responds by offering a list of subheadings. Further selections are made until the user arrives at the title of the resource he wants. This type of directory may not be suitable for every sort of query, but it is popular with users, who are not so much searching as browsing through the system.

The role of browsing tools

As a tool to aid browsing, the GCL provides the set of headings that makes up a directory. Users may drill down through the hierarchical levels of the directory until they reach the resources of choice, or combine a free text search with a subject category.

Example: I am looking for information about bats. If I search for “bats” alone, I will retrieve all manner of hits. But if I combine ‘bats’ with the category “Nature conservation” I will find items about protecting threatened bat species and similar matters. If, however, I combine “bats” with the category “Sports and recreation”, I will find out about cricket bats and baseball bats.

To guide people around thousands of different resources, web sites must integrate the support for browsing with other forms of search facility.

Metadata makes a directory easy

Directories are popular with users, but setting one up can give the webmaster a lot of work. If a site has its own unique set of categories, the webmaster may have to examine each new resource to set up a link from the right heading(s). This tedious job can be automated completely if all resources entering the system already incorporate the category headings in their metadata. Provided that all departments and agencies select their metatags from one common list of headings creating a directory is made very easy.

While using the GCL is mandatory in the metadata of information resources (including the metadata of the website as a whole), for website directories it is optional. Most public sector bodies will prefer to display a more detailed directory reflecting their specialist areas. The information resources on the site points will contain GCL metadata, and may also contain local headings, so they can be mapped to different web directories.

How will all this work?

Individual information resources will have one or more headings from the GCL in the Subject.category element. They may also have terms from a local scheme, provided these terms are tagged to show their origin.

Web sites and portals will each have the directory of their choice. UKOnline will use the GCL; sites belonging to public sector bodies may use the GCL but will probably prefer directories reflecting their specialist services and information.

Any of the directories may link to resources via the terms in their Subject.category elements.

Description of the GCL

Citizen focus

The scheme aims to be intuitive for the citizen seeking information across the broad range of public sector information. This means:

- ?? it prefers layman's language to Civil Service jargon or technical terms
- ?? it does not assume prior knowledge of how responsibilities are allocated between levels of government, or between different public sector bodies.
- ?? common usage is more important than academic accuracy when choosing the names and positions of headings.

Polyhierarchy

Designed as a browsing/navigation tool, the scheme allows more than one navigational route to the same category heading. For example, the heading "Passports and visas" may be found under "Embassies and consulates" in the "International affairs and defence" group; or alternatively under the "Arts, recreation and travel" heading. It will be important for directory implementers to ensure that all resources bearing the "Passports and visas" metatag are presented in both locations.

Size and depth

The number of levels is a compromise between enabling precision and not confusing the user with too much detail. The total number of headings in the scheme is around 350, including 12 at the top level and about 120 at the second level. There are more levels only where there is greater need to discriminate between subjects.

The internal systems and/or web sites of many authorities and agencies may need detail that is quite inappropriate for the GCL. Many will want to maintain specialist vocabularies, and the Office of the e-Envoy (OeE) actively encourages this. The e-GMS will permit the addition of Subject metadata from other controlled vocabularies, as well as the GCL. However, some compatibility must be retained in the interests of efficiency and joined-up government. The *GCL Maintenance Guide** helps with the design and maintenance of alternative vocabularies. *Specialised Vocabularies and the GCL** gives hints on how to operate a specialist vocabulary in harmony with the GCL.

Index

A separate Index of over 1400 entries has been prepared to help authors and administrators when meta-tagging. The Index includes many lead-in entries (for example, "Abattoirs *See* Meat and livestock industries") to help people find the right heading. It also shows scope notes and cross-references between headings (for example, "Arms control *See also* Firearms").

Stability versus Change

Users and implementers alike will find it easiest if the content of the GCL remains stable. On the other hand, the world is not standing still. Regular updating will have to respond to political and economic events, changes in technology, the demands of the public, and so on. Updates will be issued every four months initially, but perhaps less frequently from 2003.

Format

The GCL may be downloaded from GovTalk as a set of HTML files, or an RTF document. An ASCII text version is also available on request.

Implementation: Meta-tagging and mappings

The usefulness of the GCL depends on widespread implementation. Most organisations will have an authoring interface to assist web administrators or document creators in assigning metadata. The guidelines on *Meta-tagging with the GCL*, available on GovTalk, can be incorporated (with or without adaptation) in the Help screens or printed manuals associated with the interface.

The GCL and its Index should be integrated with the interface so that the user can rapidly browse and click on selected headings to enter them as Subject tags. An HTML version of the GCL is available for this purpose. Where the user

* Available on www.GovTalk.gov.uk/

habitually deals with a limited subject area, things can be simplified even more by presenting him with just a pre-selected subset of the GCL.

Use of local specialist vocabularies/thesauri

In organisations that operate their own more specific vocabulary as well as the GCL, authors will find the meta-tagging tedious if they have to do the job twice, using different schemes. This may lead to irritation and poor quality results. One solution is to implement an automatic mapping scheme.

Example: The departmental vocabulary may include the term “Copyright”, which is not a heading in the GCL. The nearest heading in the GCL is “Intellectual property”. If the department builds and implements an automatic mapping table, then every time an author enters “Copyright” as Subject metadata, the system will look up the table and add “Intellectual property” automatically as the corresponding GCL category.

Role of the Office of the e-Envoy

The Office of the e-Envoy aims to support departments in their development of cost-effective meta-tagging arrangements. The guidance note *Specialised vocabularies and the GCL* gives examples of mapping schemes already operated by a number of departments. Additional guidance may become available on related subjects, such as metadata toolkits.